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# SEAFDEC AQD Matters

In-house newsletter of the SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department, Tigbauan, Iloilo

## SEAFDEC Council meets in Bali, reappoints AQD Chief

**S**EAFFDEC Secretary General Dr. Siri Ekmaharaj, in his report to the 40th Council Meeting, announced that Philippine President Gloria Arroyo has endorsed the reappointment of Dr. Joebert Toledo as AQD Chief for another two years, from April 2008 until April 2010.

The SEAFDEC Council welcomed and formally approved the re-appointment of Dr. Toledo.

The meeting was held last April 7-10 in Bali, Indonesia.

### AQD's Work Programs

The meeting provided a forum for knowing the progress of work programs and planned activities of the Departments and the Secretariat. Dr. Toledo

presented the highlights of accomplishments of AQD's programs for 2007 and planned activities for 2008. The Council acknowledged with appreciation the accomplishments made in 2007 and endorsed the work programs for 2008.

The Council also had the opportunity to get a better glimpse of what AQD has been doing and what it has contributed over the years in the region in terms of aquaculture development through the presentation of the video entitled 'AQD Magic'. The video presentation which was made during the dinner sponsored by the Secretary General and held in the pool area of Inna Grand Bali Beach was well-received by the participants and guests.

### AQD's Revised Mandate and Organizational Structure

The future operation of SEAFDEC, and areas for improvement, were also taken up. Dr. Toledo briefed the participants on the outcomes of the strategic planning workshops conducted by AQD in 2007, and the subsequent in-house meetings which resulted in the Department's revised vision, mission, goals, strategies and organizational structure. The Council noted and endorsed the revisions made by AQD on its organizational structure and strategic plan, which have been developed in response to the current fisheries situation and the available resources for implementation of the activities. >>2



AQD Chief Dr. JD Toledo and the participants of the 40th SEAFDEC Council Meeting



The meeting was attended by participants representing the SEAFDEC Council Members from 11 countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam), representatives of international/regional organizations (ASEAN Secretariat, Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO/RAP), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Swedish Board of Fisheries, SEAFDEC Departments and the Secretariat.

AQD was represented by Dr. Toledo, Deputy Chief Dr. Hiroshi Ogata, and Ms. Belen Acosta.

The gathering was hosted by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Government of Indonesia.

Important fisheries issues discussed in the Meeting included (1) efforts and achievements of SEAFDEC in the implementation of responsible fisheries, particularly the promotion and adoption of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) in the region; (2) the establishment of the Regional Advisory Committee for Fisheries

Management in Southeast Asia as a subsidiary body to the SEAFDEC Council; (3) the involvement of SEAFDEC in the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing by providing advice to the RPOA Coordination Committee; (4) the strengthening of the cooperation with ASEAN through the formalization of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP); (5) the establishment of common positions on emerging international fisheries-related issues to safeguard the region's fisheries interests; and (6) the new Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia focusing on the minimum requirements for the improved collection and compilation of fishery statistics.

A newly-published booklet, which provides a summary of SEAFDEC accomplishments since 1998 under the Japanese Trust Fund projects on sustainable development of fisheries in the ASEAN region, was also formally launched.

The year 2007 marked SEAFDEC's 40 years of invaluable contribution for fisheries development in Southeast Asia. The Council noted these contributions,

and congratulated SEAFDEC for being a recipient of the Margarita Lizárraga Medal Award for the biennium 2006-2007 from FAO.

The Council and representatives of SEAFDEC and other regional and international organizations will meet again in 2009 during the Council Meeting to be hosted by Japan.

#### Department Chiefs' Meeting

Back to back with the 40<sup>th</sup> SEAFDEC Council Meeting, the *Ad Hoc* Department Chiefs' Meeting was held last April 7 in the same venue.

The meeting discussed the activities proposed by SEAFDEC for fund allocation from the Japanese unspent funds, as follows: (1) meeting on small-scale fisheries in Southeast Asia for the World Conference on Small-scale Fisheries; (2) Project on Small-scale Fisheries Management: Promotion of Inland Small-scale Fisheries Management through Right-based Fisheries and Co-management towards Institutional Building and Participation Approaches; and (3) Workshop for Streamline Reporting of Fishery Statistics for Southeast Asia.

The meeting also tackled issues related to reporting of SEAFDEC Departments on Financial Matters.

– B ACOSTA





## Dr. JD Toledo: the first 2 years so far

**2**006: April was the first time AQD got a Chief who rose from the ranks. Dr. Joebert Toledo was first employed as research assistant in 1981 and became Scientist II in 2002. His status as a Department insider for 23 years made it easy for him to define and implement a vision of a streamlined organization capable of addressing the needs of the aquaculture industry for science-based technologies.

Dr. Toledo's first act was to bring back 22 researchers and other senior staff to carry out AQD's programs. His Management then reviewed technologies developed by the Research Division: gaps were identified for further research and verification, and plans were made for dissemination of research findings.

Efforts in fund sourcing have also been done to improve AQD's overall financial standing, which includes continuing

collaboration with research partners. AQD's visibility in the local and international scene were also sustained through the Internet and participation in fairs and exhibits.

AQD was successful in tapping provincial and local government units to fund an Institutional Capacity Development for Sustainable Aquaculture (ICD-SA) project. ICD-SA aims to build the capacities of aquatic resource users by providing them knowledge and skills to become responsible resources managers and users. Arrangements were made with various stakeholder groups (i.e., government agencies, LGUs, international organizations, private companies, private foundations) to make this dream project a reality.

**2**007: This may be considered the year when AQD institutionalized its technology transfer mechanism for the private

sector while continuing to demonstrate technologies for people's cooperatives and local governments.

The private sector was offered the Agree-build-operate-transfer aquaculture business packages (ABOT AquaNegosyo), with abalone, mudcrab, grouper, milkfish, seabass, native catfish, bighead carp, tilapia, freshwater prawn, and seaweeds as priority commodities.

AQD signed 17 new formal agreements with various partners for the implementation of its projects. Also notable is that for the first time, the mariculture park at the Igang Marine Station was opened up for the use of the private sector and a people's cooperative.

The year also saw AQD exceed by 50% the number of trainees compared to 2006: 300 stakeholders attended 23 training courses. In addition, 5 new manuals, 8 flyers and 15 large-format posters have been printed.

Also in 2007, around 80 research studies and technology generation projects were approved, some with external funding provided by GOJ Trust Fund, ASEAN, Kagoshima University and Fisheries Research Agency in Japan, ACIAR, UP Visayas, DOST, and various private companies. A total of 44 scientific papers were written by AQD researchers, 30 of which were published in scientific journals.

**2**008: For the first four months, AQD signed up two new partners from the provincial government of Misamis Occidental and the Department of Agrarian Reform. AQD's budget from the Government of the Philippines stands at 128.5 million, an increase of 28.5 million compared to 2006.

### More power, Dr. JDT!

## A visit to dev't projects of Thailand's Royal Family

By B ACOSTA



**O**n 16 February 2008, after the Department Chief's Meeting, we (AQD Chief Dr. JD Toledo; Deputy Chief, Dr. Hiroshi Ogata; Mrs. Rieko Ogata, some staff members of the SEAFDEC Secretariat and myself) traveled to Doi Inthanon, Chiang Mai Province and visited the Royal Family's projects.

The site is reputed to be the highest peak in Thailand (2,599 meters above sea level) so the air was cool and refreshing during the time of our visit. The Research Station that we visited grows rainbow trout and Siberian sturgeon, and farming of these is being managed by Thailand's Department of Fisheries.

We were told that the parent stocks of rainbow trout came all the way from Germany, and that approximately 20 tons of rainbow trout are being produced by the Royal Project every year.

During the visit, we also spotted some young frogs and indigenous small fishes stocked in the aquaria. These are being bred by the Project for stock enhancement activities to replenish the dwindling population of frogs and other indigenous species in the wild.

From the Fisheries Project, we proceeded to the Royal Family's agriculture project which was just a few kilometers away. Several flowering plants of varying colors were

in bloom. We stopped at a restaurant within the Royal Family's project site to have lunch. We were served sautéed vegetables from the farm, fried and smoked rainbow trout and seaweed soup with tofu.

It is a well-known fact that the development projects of the Royal Family have continued to play an important role in improving the livelihoods of the poor throughout the country, particularly the poor farmers in Northern Thailand.

The visit to these projects made us understand better why the Royal Family is well-loved and a source of inspiration to the Thai people.

# Hatchery training for the Philippines

Grouper aquaculturists were hopefully all the wiser after 19 days of training during the *Grouper hatchery training for the Philippines*.

Conducted from April 7-25 at AQD's Tigbauan Main Station, the training covered both lectures and hands-on practical sessions. The trainees were put through their paces in areas such as biology of grouper; site selection; hatchery design and construction; broodstock management and spawning; production of natural food; disease diagnosis; fish health management; larval and nursery rearing; fish nutrition; and grading of fry and fingerlings. Special topics on cage design and culture of marine fish and business planning, marketing management and economic indicators were likewise discussed.

The training was fully funded by the Australia Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). The Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) was the coordinating agency. Mr. Barney Smith of ACIAR and Mr. Sih Yang Sim of NACA dropped by during the training.

The 15 trainees were Mr. Stephen Abamo, Mr. Reynaldo Acap, Mr. John Aloria, Ms. Bernabe Aquino, Mr. Reynaldo Benson, Ms. Arlyn Carroz, Ms. Minvilu Casido, Mr. Primo Ebesate, Mr. Alan Failaman, Mr. Arnel Gabasa, Ms. Tina Marie Hautea, Mr. Jovert Javier, Mr. Oliven Laguna, Mr. Tito Piloton, and Ms. Ma. Caroline Tejero. There were five (5) observers from the private sector including one from LGU Aklan.

Below are some snapshots of the training activities.

PHOTOS BY RT BAUTISTA





## 4th session of Dumarao training ends with harvest

The fourth and last session of the *Season-long training course on freshwater aquaculture*, which tackled harvest and post-harvest handling, ended with, appropriately enough, the harvest of catfish, tilapia and freshwater prawn.

The activity, held last March 31-April 1 in Brgy. Tamulalod, Dumarao, Capiz, saw the members of Dumarao Fish Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (DFFMPC) listen

to lectures and perform hands-on harvest of their stocks.

Ms. Rose Mueda of UP Visayas handled the lectures, which dealt with proper handling and icing of aquatic products, preparation of materials for value addition, marketing techniques and the requirements in the establishment of fish processing ventures.

To date, a total of around 197 kilos of tilapia, 41 kilos of catfish, and 3.2 kilos of *ulang* – sold at P100, P110, and P200 per kilo, respectively – have been harvested from four cages, with supervision from AQD's Ms. Kaylin Corre, head of Training Section and Mr. Rosenio Pagador, Senior Training Assistant.

In the closing ceremonies, Mr. Renato Agbayani, Head of the Training and Information Division, advised the beneficiaries to re-invest and roll-over the revenue until the project is big enough so that the members could partake

of the fruits of their labor. He also added that a second round of production, to be led by Dr. Josefa Fermin, Scientist at AQD, is being planned to give the beneficiaries a better grasp of the technology.

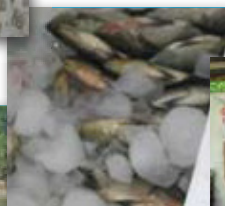
Mr. Virgilio Hapitan, DFFMPC chair, said that the project had benefited them by reducing poverty and unemployment in their area; in addition, they were able to utilize the natural resources in their area. He noted, however, that the project was not without challenges: he had to deal with the "behavior" of certain members. In spite of this, Mr. Hapitan learned a thing or two from the experience: "No is not really a no, and this can be changed into a yes, and that negative can be changed into positive." He also learned the importance of setting a good example as a leader, which includes always looking out for the welfare of the members. He recounted that the cooperative has plans of holding other income-generating activities.

Dumarao Mayor Leslie Warren Benjamin, for his part expressed his gratitude for the conduct of the training, which gave the people technical knowledge and skills in growing fish and crustaceans. He was also on hand to distribute certificates of training to 31 trainees and certificates of attendance to 19 others.

Capiz Provincial Agriculturist Ms. Sylvia dela Cruz and her staff were also present during the event.

The training course was implemented under the Institutional Capacity Development for Sustainable Aquaculture or ICD-SA, which has the main goal of empowering aquatic resource users by providing them knowledge to become efficient managers and prudent users of their resources.

R PAGADOR, R GUARIN



Clockwise from top: Ms. Rose Mueda (second from right) during her lecture; fish were iced after harvest; Mr. Hapitan (center) walks off after receiving his certificate from Mayor Benjamin and Mr. Agbayani; group shot during the closing ceremonies; and the project site in Brgy. Tamulalod



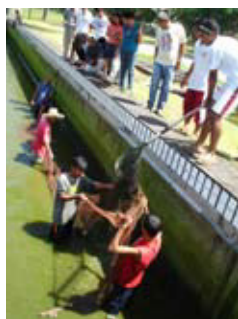
## Catfish harvest at Tibiao

April 16 wasn't such a bad day for the administrators, faculty and students of the Polytechnic State College of Antique-Tario Lim Campus, Tibiao, Antique.

After all, they were able to harvest not less than 100 kilos of hybrid catfish, with around four catfish per kilo. Culture took 5-6 months, with survival rate of 85 percent.

In addition to observing the harvest, AQD's Dr. Josefa Fermin and Ms. Kaylin Corre also took the opportunity to discuss with Dr. Victor Navarra, PSCA president, PSCA-Tario Lim Campus Administrator Dr. Armando Cabrillos, and Dr. Romeo Caturao on future activities and training sessions.

Training courses on Freshwater Aquaculture, and Research Methodology will be conducted in May and June 2008, respectively, to be funded by PSCA.



## Reg'l workshop on aquatic animal health

**D**r. Gilda Lio-Po, head of AQD's Fish Health Section, presented a paper on the development of fish disease surveillance system during the *Regional workshop on aquatic animal health* held in Bangkok, Thailand from March 25-28.

The workshop was organized by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA).

The participants were welcomed by Dr. Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, Professor

Sena De Silva, Director General of NACA, and Dr. Supranee Chinabut, Adviser on Fish Health, Thailand's Department of Fisheries.

The four-day activity featured technical sessions on a wide range of topics, including the economic impact of aquatic animal diseases; an introduction to OIE standards for aquatic animal health; the World Animal Health Information Database (WAHID) and World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS); and important crustacean and fish diseases. Aquatic animal

health situationers were also presented by representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, and Vietnam.

In addition, practical sessions were also held, with topics on immediate notification and follow-up reports, preparation of six-monthly and annual reports, and hands-on training on WAHIS.

## Info seminar in Sagay City

**G**iant clam and abalone, how do Sagay City fishers appreciate thee?

Let us count the ways: First, the fishers attended AQD's information seminar, which discussed the biology of the two species stocked in Carbin reef.

Second, they participated in the management and conservation of the clams and abalone by vowing not to

extract these molluscs from the protected site.

The activity was held in Molocaboc Island last March 13. This was in response to fisherfolks' request that surfaced in last year's validation meeting. The November 30 meeting was part of the activities of the study *Socio-economic analysis of stock enhancement of abalone and giant clams in Sagay Marine Reserve*.

AQD's Mr. Ramil Pilon

and Ms. Ellen Flor Solis conducted the seminar on the appreciation and biology of giant clams and abalone. Dr. Nerissa Salayo gave updates on the project on stock enhancement; this was followed by an open forum moderated by Dr. Salayo and Ms. Dianne Hope Tormon.

The speakers made it clear to the participants that these species should not be extracted from the reef, and that it takes several years for them to mature and spawn. (Giant clams are actually protected from extraction under the Fisheries Code).

The information seminar was not only attended by fishers of Sagay, but also by different stakeholders (41 fishers, all barangay officials, 2 patrol staff of SMR, 1 social development worker-SMR, 1 abalone trader).

The information seminar ended with an eye opener on the part of fishers on the feasibility of ecotourism on areas where stock enhancement is taking place. Furthermore, they requested an ecotourism seminar for next time.

— DH TORMON



IT TENDENCIA





## Research seminars at AQD

For three Thursdays in a row, AQD staff flocked to the RD Audiovisual Room to hear what the proponents have to say about their studies.

AQD's Fish Health Section head Dr. Gilda Lio-Po talked about the paper *Comparison of characteristics of Koi herpesvirus (KHV) isolates from Asia* last April 3. Dr. Lio-Po noted that the virus cannot tolerate a temperature of 35°C for 24 hours. The study also confirmed that at least two strains of the virus affected the common and koi carp of Indonesia, Taiwan, China and Japan indicating the

transboundary movement of the virus in Asia. Several different strains were also reported by other scientists in Europe and the Americas.

The following week, AQD's Dr. Rolando Pakingking Jr expounded on *Aquabirnavirus (ABV)-induced resistance of marine fish against piscine nodavirus infection* last April 10. The results of the study indicated that ABV-induced interferons could effectively suppress the progression of secondary betanodavirus infection.

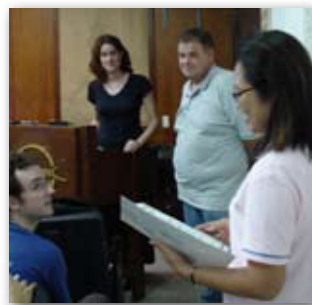
Mr. Dan Baliao of AQD presented papers on *Shrimp for the future? Penaeus indicus/ merguensis*, a DBS experience and the 2006 report on *Approaches in abalone, Pacific white shrimp and mudcrab husbandry in Thailand* last April 17. Among the things he shared is that white shrimps are indigenous

to the Philippines, are not susceptible to diseases, and they have an established local market, with potential for export.

Dr. Marielle van Riel, a scientist working for the Council of Anini-y, San Jose, Tobias Fornier & Hamtic for the Advancement of Viable Environment (COASTHAVEN) and stationed at Anini-y, Antique, presented a video on *Crown of thorns-starfishes* the same day, which featured their work in the area. They have observed that the declining population of predatory fish (which feed on starfish larvae) in the coral reef areas resulted to an increase in the number of starfishes, which in turn causes the further degradation of the reefs. Her other companions, Commander Gert Heyns and Mr. Ian Geerling, were on hand to answer questions during the open forum.



JE SALAMIDA, RP GUARIN



## The new (inter)face of AQD's webmail

AQD employees were greeted by a new web mail interface last April 14th.

More than just an interface tweak, the new AQD web mail is now hosted on Google Apps. Previously, AQD's email is being hosted by AQD's local servers using SquirrelMail.

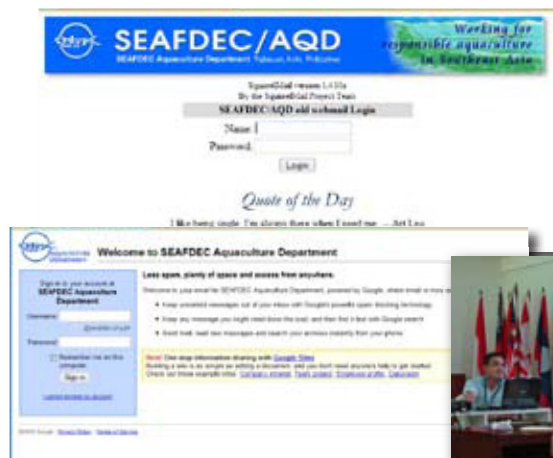
To make sure that the transition goes smoothly, orientations were held last April 10-11 at TMS by the Systems and Network Administration team composed of Messrs. Jezreel Cyrus Gebucion and Ave Aron Araña. An introduction to the features was conducted, along with hands-on demos and open forum.

What are the benefits in doing the switch? For starters, AQD could save a lot on

hardware and infrastructure upgrades, which cost hundreds of thousands, since everything is handled by Google's servers situated worldwide. The new setup also promises "world-class" spam protection, a common scourge among e-mail users. Other related services include real-time collaboration and sharing of documents and a built-in instant messaging feature. Mr. Gebucion also cited that additional costs on phone calls could be shaved by using Google Talk, a separate application used to make PC-to-PC calls. And the price? It's all for free.

The downside, though, is that users see advertisements in their email; network maintenance of Google's service could cause email interruptions during certain days; and there's no guarantee that the service remains free.

Happy log-in!



Before and after: AQD web mail's login page gets a facelift; Mr. Gebucion extolling the virtues of the Google Apps





## AQD at the Bicol Agri-Fair...

**A**QD made its presence known in Region V during the fourth year of the Bicol trade fair, organized by the Metro Naga Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) and the City Government of Naga.

MRR EGUJA



The activity, held last April 13-19 in Plaza Quezon and Plaza Rizal, Naga, Camarines Sur, was conducted to introduce the local folk (and visitors to Bicol), to trade and investment opportunities in the province.

The fair included consumer goods, real estate and tourism booths.

AQD was invited as the organizers felt that the aquaculture technologies it has developed can offer new opportunities to Bicolano entrepreneurs who may have very little

knowledge of what AQD is, the new programs (ABOT and ICDSA) and services it can provide and what it has done in other regions in the Philippines.

Despite the not-so-good booth visitor turn-out (20 visitors/day) and manual sales (P1770), AQD staff from Binangonan Freshwater Station were able to introduce SEAFDEC to the local folk who asked whether SEAFDEC had an office/facility in Bicol.

Several of the booth visitors inquired about training programs (mostly on-site training), the ABOT AquaNegosyo, as well as the ICDSA programs of SEAFDEC. The trade fair was also a good opportunity to disseminate information regarding AQD's training and technology packages.

— FROM THE REPORT OF MRR EGUJA

## ...Sagay City Sinigayan Festival...

**T**he first-ever Sinigayan Agri-Fair was one of the main attractions during the celebration of Sagay City's Sinigayan Festival, and AQD took part in the occasion.

The event ran from March 14-17 and was held at the city public plaza.

Among the guests who graced the festival were Department of Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, who was the guest of honor and speaker during the opening program, Negros Occidental 1st District Rep. Julio Ledesma IV and his wife, actress Assunta de Rossi.

AQD set up a booth, where P3,630 worth of information materials were bought.

Visitors also snapped-up free information brochures and flyers.

IT TENDENCIA



## ...and Semana sang Iloilo

**K**ultura kag turismo: padulong sa mainuswagon nga pala-abuton was the theme for the 107th celebration of the *Semana sang Iloilo* last April 8-11.

The four-day event, held at the Capitol Grounds in Iloilo City, was jam-packed with activities, including an agro-industrial fair, exhibit, foodfests, street dancing, fora, and a pageant search for *Lin-ay sang Probinsya 2008*.

AQD took part in the activity by putting up a booth displaying free flyers and entertaining queries from walk-in clients.

IT TENDENCIA



### Contributions from AQD employees are always welcome!

Please send text separately from your JPEG photos (300 dpi or better). Devcom also uses these materials to update the AQD website and as SEAFDEC Newsletter articles. Having the original text and photos would give us more flexibility

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Thanks to our colleagues who provided facts, images and feedback!

## A who's-who of AQD visitors

**A**QD never seems to run out of visitors, which is always a good thing. Both local and foreign guests were welcomed at AQD for the months of February and March.

### PDAP group

A group of 28 persons from Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi made their way to AQD last February 21-22. The group was composed of coordinators and out-of-school youth (OSY) under the SPE3 (Sitangkai Seaweed Productivity Enhancement through Education & Extension) project of the Philippine Development Assistance Programme, Inc. (PDAP). This one-year program is dedicated to improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the OSY seaweed farmers. The program enrolled 110 OSYs, who are trained to become trainers/extension workers to

the other 330 targeted OSYs in the nearby area, with the goal of reducing poverty through increased seaweed quality and productivity. Out of these 110 OSYs, 24 were brought by the coordinators to AQD to visit the hatcheries and the Dumangas and Igang stations. In addition to a discussion with Dr. Anicia Hurtado of AQD's Seaweed Strain Improvement Program, they also had an overview of abalone and seahorse culture with Ms. Shelah Mae Buen-Ursua. The coordinators were Mr. Alfred Allaga, Program Officer SPE3, Ms. Evangeline Faburada, Program Officer (Sitangkai Seaweed Industry) and Mr. Alexander Benedicto, Training Assistant.

### NACA Officials

Last February 26-28, Mr. Sim Sih Yang of the Marine Finfish Aquaculture Program of the Network of

Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) in Thailand visited AQD along with Mr. Bambang Hanggono of the Brackishwater Aquaculture Development Center in Indonesia and Mr. Samart Detsathit, Fisheries Biologist of the Krabi Coastal Fisheries R&D Center of the Department of Fisheries in Thailand. The officials visited the different laboratory and hatchery facilities at TMS, IMS, DBS and other nearby hatcheries.

### Malaysian visitors

Mr. John Brian Payne, Senior Technical Advisor from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)-Malaysia toured AQD with his son, Adam Payne last March 3-6. They had a meeting/consultation with the Chief and the Division heads, and visited the different laboratories and hatcheries at TMS, DBS and IMS. They also visited nearby hatcheries. Their main interest was in grouper culture.

### MOAP Officials

Messrs. Samson Napigkit, Nicandro Lagas, Manolito Yap, Tito Piloton and Gil Caliso of the Misamis Occidental Aquamarine Park (MOAP) dropped by AQD last February 19-22. They met with AQD Chief Dr. Joebert Toledo, division heads and project leaders to know more about recent technologies, with emphasis on grouper culture. They also visited AQD's hatcheries/facilities at TMS, DBS and IMS to see the brackishwater ponds and cage culture facilities. The group also visited some private hatcheries near the area.

— CV Genzola

CV GENZOLA



Clockwise from top: Visitors from Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi at the abalone hatchery; NACA officials checking out the cages at IMS; MOAP officials at IMS; Mr. Payne of WWF-Malaysia at DBS



# Milkfish harvest at Igang

PHOTOS BY RD DIANALA

Once upon a time (August 2007), beneficiaries of the Petron-funded milkfish cage culture project stocked milkfish fingerlings at AQD's Igang Marine Station.

Since then, four harvests have been conducted, with the last one done March 18. A total of about 9,207 kilos of milkfish have since been reaped. Average body weight was around half a kilo per fish.

Sure, there were hitches: the FCR

could've been lower, which could have resulted to higher sales, but with a survival rate of 97%, who's complaining?

It was a rewarding fishy-tale ending after almost seven months of hard work and season-long training sessions for those involved, but the payoff was worth it.

While the beneficiaries could crow about the bountiful harvest, another thing's for certain: the fish did not live happily ever after.

